

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A computer implemented method of performing electronic commerce, said computer implemented method comprising:

listing a set of available products to a set of consumers via a Web page of a Web server for online auction;

accepting a request for a specific product from a particular consumer via the Web page over a network;

accepting a reserve price for said specific product from said particular consumer, said reserve price comprising a price acceptable to said particular consumer;

distributing said request for said specific product and said reserve price to a set of sellers over the network;

accepting at most one offer from each said seller in said set of sellers, each said offer comprising an offer price specifying a price at which an associated seller will sell said specific product, said accepting occurring for a predetermined time period or until an offer having an offer price less than or equal to said reserve price is received;

if there is only one offer having an offer price less than or equal to the reserve price, consummating, without intervention from the consumer, a transaction with said offer having an offer price less than or equal to said reserve price if said offer having an offer price less than or equal to the reserve price is received;

if there are multiple offers having an offer price less than to the reserve price, presenting to the consumer the multiple offers sorted in a predetermined order to allow the consumer to select one offer from the multiple offers;

consummating a transaction with an offer selected by the consumer if the

consumer selects from the multiple offers; and

consummating a transaction with an offer having a lowest price from the multiple offers if the consumer does not select from the multiple offers.

2. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 1 wherein listing a set of available products comprising operating a World Wide Web site with a catalog of products.

3. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 2 wherein said catalog of products is searchable.

4. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 2 wherein said World Wide Web site comprises a hierarchical directory of products.

5. (Currently amended) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 1 wherein accepting a request for a specific product from a particular consumer comprises receiving an ~~HMTL~~HTML form.

6. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 1 wherein distributing said request for said specific product to a set of sellers comprises creating a web page that specifies said request for said specific product and said reserve price.

7. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 1 wherein distributing said request for said specific product to a set of sellers comprises sending an email to at least one seller that specifies said request for said specific product and said reserve price.

8. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 1 wherein accepting offer prices from sellers comprises receiving an email that specifies an offer price for said specific product.

9. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 1 wherein accepting offer prices from sellers comprises receiving an HTML form page that specifies an offer price for said specific product.

10. (Previously Presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 1, said computer implemented method further comprising:

displaying a subset of offers from said sellers to said particular consumer if none of said offers from said sellers are below said reserve price, the subset of offers being higher than the reserve price.

11. (Previously Presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 10 wherein displaying the subset of offers comprises sending an email message specifying the subset of offers to said particular consumer.

12. (Previously Presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 10 wherein displaying the subset of offers comprises generating a web page specifying the subset of offers.

13. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 10, said computer implemented method further comprising:

receiving a designation of one of said offer prices from said particular consumer;
and

consummating a transaction between said particular consumer and a seller that offered said designated offer price.

14. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 13 wherein an identification information associated with said particular consumer is provided to said seller that offered said designated offer price only after said particular consumer has designated said seller.

15. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 13 wherein an identification information associated with said seller that offered said designated offer price is provided to said particular consumer only after said particular consumer has designated said seller.

16. (Previously presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 1, said computer implemented method further comprising:

accepting a transaction fee after consummating said transaction.

17. (Previously Presented) The computer implemented method as claimed in claim 1, said computer implemented method further comprising:

accepting a consumer registration prior to accepting the request for the specific product

from the particular consumer, said consumer registration comprising information from a consumer required to consummate a transaction between said consumer and a seller.

18-33. (canceled)

34. (Previously Presented) The computer implemented method of claim 10, further comprising:

allowing, for a second predetermined time period, the particular consumer to select one of the subset of offers;

consummating a transaction between the particular consumer and a seller of the selected offer from the subset of offers during the second predetermined time period, if the particular consumer selects from the subset of offers; and

consummating a transaction between the particular consumer and a seller offering a lowest offer price if the particular consumer does not select from the subset of offers within the second predetermined time period.

35. (Currently amended) A machine-readable medium having executable code to cause a machine to perform a method for online auction, the method comprising:

listing a set of available products to a set of consumers via a Web page of a Web server for online auction;

accepting a request for a specific product from a particular consumer via the Web page over a network;

accepting a reserve price for said specific product from said particular consumer, said reserve price comprising a price acceptable to said particular consumer;

distributing said request for said specific product and said reserve price to a set of sellers over the network;

accepting at most one offer from each said seller in said set of sellers, each said offer comprising an offer price specifying a price at which an associated seller will sell said specific product, said accepting occurring for a predetermined time period or until an offer having an offer price less than or equal to said reserve price is received;

if there is only one offer having an offer price less than or equal to the reserve price, consummating, without intervention from the consumer, a transaction with said offer having an offer price less than or equal to said reserve price if said offer having an offer price less than or equal to the reserve price is received;

if there are multiple offers having an offer price less than to the reserve price, presenting to the consumer the multiple offers sorted in a predetermined order to allow the consumer to select one offer from the multiple offers;

consummating a transaction with an offer selected by the consumer if the

consumer selects from the multiple offers; and

consummating a transaction with an offer having a lowest price from the multiple offers if the consumer does not select from the multiple offers.

36. (Currently amended) A data processing system, comprising:

a processor; and

a memory coupled to the processor for storing instructions, when executed from the memory, cause the processor to

list a set of available products to a set of consumers via a Web page of a Web server for online auction,

accept a request for a specific product from a particular consumer via the Web page over a network,

accept a reserve price for said specific product from said particular

consumer, said reserve price comprising a price acceptable to said particular consumer,

distribute said request for said specific product and said reserve price to a set of sellers over the network,

accept at most one offer from each said seller in said set of sellers, each said offer comprising an offer price specifying a price at which an associated seller will sell said specific product, said accepting occurring for a predetermined time period or until an offer having an offer price less than or equal to said reserve price is received,

if there is only one offer having an offer price less than or equal to the reserve price, consummate, without intervention from the consumer, a transaction with said offer having an offer price less than or equal to said reserve price if said offer having an offer price less than or equal to the reserve price is received,

if there are multiple offers having an offer price less than ~~to~~ the reserve price, present to the consumer the multiple offers sorted in a predetermined order to allow the consumer to select one offer from the multiple offers,

consummate a transaction with an offer selected by the consumer if the consumer selects from the multiple offers, and

consummate a transaction with an offer having a lowest price from the multiple offers if the consumer does not select from the multiple offers.